AVON PUBLICATION

TALES OF FANTASY AND SUSPENSE!

No.4

10c

ANC

EERIE

PHANTOMS OF REALITY

THE SHIP OF DEATH

CREMATION OF EVIL

THE PUPPET PULLS THE STRINGS

WHAT MONSTER HAS HE CREATED? WHO SERVES WHOM, THE MASTER OR THE GIANT DOLL OF WOOD? WHO KILLS, AND WHO DIES, WHEN--- "THE PUPPET PULLS THE STRINGS!"
IT SAILED OUT OF THE FOG--INTO THE LIVES OF TWO INNOCENT PEOPLE! AND EVERY BILLOW OF ITS GHOSTLY SAIL STRUCK TERROR INTO THEIR HEARTS! FOR HORROR RODE "THE SHIP OF DEATH!!"
TWO WORLDS--WHERE THERE HAD BEEN ONE! CHARLIE WALTON CRAVED ADVENTURE--AND FOUND IT-- IN ANOTHER WORLD, ON HIS OWN DOORSTEP--BATTLING THE--"PHANTOMS OF REALITY!"
FIRE BURNS HUNGRILY!! AND UP IN GREY WISPS OF SMOKE GOES A NAMELESS SOMETHING, FREEING RICHARD SINCLAIR FROM HIS PACT WITH THE FORCES OF BLACKNESS! LICKING FLAMES CLUTCH A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN EAGERLY, ANXIOUS TO BE FINISHED WITH THEIR-- "CREMATION OF EVIL!!"

EERIE, Dec. 1951-Jan. 1952—Vol. 1, Number 4. Published bi-monthly by AVON PERIODICALS, Inc., 575 Madison Avenue, New York 22, N. Y.™ Joe Meyers, Pres., Sol Cohen, Editor and General Manager. Application for second class entry pending at the Post Office, New York, N.Y. One year subscription in the U.S. 40c plus 15c for packing and mailing—total 55c, elsewhere $1.00 Copyright 1951 by Avon Periodicals, Inc. All names in this periodical are entirely fictitious and no identification with actual persons is intended. Printed in U. S. A.

Cremation of EVIL

THE BOTTOMLESS SLIME OF DEGREDATION WOULD SEEM THE NATURAL HOME OF EVIL.. BUT BEAUTY CAN BE A RESTING PLACE FOR THE TALONS OF DEPRAVITY! WHEN A MAN REALIZES THAT HIS INTENSE DESIRE TO BREAK THE NATURAL LAWS OF LIFE HAS CALLED A GREAT EVIL INTO THE WORLD, THEN HIS VERY SOUL SHRINKS FROM THE HORROR HE HAS CAUSED...AND HE KNOWS HE WILL NEVER BE FREE UNTIL THIS HORROR IS GONE!

IT BEGAN WITH LOVE... THIS TALE OF EVIL. BARBARA SINCLAIR WAS DYING...

REMEMBER, RICHARD DARLING... I DON'T WANT ANY TEARS! AND WHEN I DIE...I...WANT ...TO...BE...CREMATED! DON'T FORGET THAT.
NO! YOU MUSTN'T TALK THAT WAY! NOTHING'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO YOU!
PLEASE, MR. SINCLAIR!

CAN THE WILL OF ONE MAN KEEP A LOVED ONE FROM DEATH? AT THIS MOMENT IT DIDN'T SEEM SO, BECAUSE...

WH-WHAT IS IT, DOCTOR? WHAT'S THE MATTER? WHY ARE YOU SO QUIET?

I'M SORRY, MR. SINCLAIR. YOUR WIFE IS...GONE!

YOU LET HER DIE! GET OUT OF HERE! GET OUT AND LEAVE ME ALONE WITH MY WIFE, BEFORE I...

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, MAN. I'LL WAIT FOR YOU IN THE OUTER ROOM.

PLEASE, DARLING...DON'T LEAVE ME! YOU'RE ALL I HAVE IN THE WORLD! PLEASE...PLEASE... OPEN YOUR EYES!

DOES ANY MAN KNOW WHAT DEATH IS? RICHARD SINCLAIR DIDN'T...AND HE DIDN'T CARE! HE KNEW JUST ONE THING... *HIS WIFE MUST LIVE AGAIN!*

THERE MUST BE SOME POWER THAT WILL BRING YOU BACK TO ME! EVEN THE POWER OF EVIL...*YES!* I CALL ON THE POWER OF EVIL TO HELP ME! *HELP ME!!*

OHHHHHHHHHH!

WH-WHAT HAPPENED? WHY ARE YOU SO UPSET?

YOU...YOU *ARE* ALIVE! I KNEW IT! I KNEW IT!! *DOCTOR...COME QUICKLY!!*

SEE? I TOLD YOU... SHE'S ALIVE!

IT'S NOT POSSIBLE! IT MUST BE A MIRACLE! COME... LET ME FEEL YOUR PULSE...

NO! GET AWAY! DON'T COME NEAR ME!

MAKE HIM GO AWAY, RICHARD! DON'T LET HIM TOUCH ME!

BUT, MRS. SINCLAIR...YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! THIS IS SOMETHING UNHEARD OF IN MEDICAL SCIENCE, AND...

YOU HEARD HER, DOCTOR! YOU BLUNDERED ONCE BEFORE...AND I WON'T HAVE YOU TOUCHING MY WIFE AGAIN! GET OUT...AND THIS TIME...DON'T COME BACK!

ONCE RICHARD WAS SURE DR. JONES WAS OUT OF THE HOUSE, HE RACED BACK TO THE BEDROOM ...

DARLING! YOU SHOULDN'T BE GETTING UP SO SOON! WAIT... I'LL HELP YOU!

NO! I DON'T WANT *ANYBODY* TO TOUCH ME ..DO YOU HEAR? I NEVER FELT BETTER IN MY... UH ... LIFE!

AND LATER --

HERE! YOU MUST BE STARVED. I KNOW I AM...

NO... I DON'T HAVE TO EAT... I MEAN... I'M NOT HUNGRY. YOU GO AHEAD!

THAT WAS THE FIRST STRANGENESS. THE SECOND CAME THAT NIGHT...

BARBARA! IT'S FOUR IN THE MORNING! AREN'T YOU COMING TO BED?

I TOLD YOU NOT TO BOTHER ME! I'M PERFECTLY ALL RIGHT HERE!

AND SO IT WAS FOR TWO DAYS, AND THEN...

WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU, BARBARA? YOU HAVEN'T EATEN OR SLEPT FOR DAYS! IT ISN'T ...HUMAN!

DON'T EVER SAY THAT!... DON'T YOU THINK YOU SHOULD ANSWER THE DOOR BELL? MUST BE THE MAID.

RING!

OH, MR. SINCLAIR ... I HEAR THAT MRS. SINCLAIR IS UP AND ABOUT! I THINK THAT'S WONDERFUL NEWS.

YES, IT IS, ANNIE. BUT I'M GLAD YOU'RE STAYING OVERNIGHT THIS TIME. THINGS ARE IN A TERRIBLE MESS.

THAT NIGHT ...

WHERE'S MRS. SINCLAIR? ISN'T SHE EATING NOW?

NO, ANNIE.. SHE'S NOT HUNGRY. OH ... I LEFT MY PIPE IN THE LIBRARY. WOULD YOU MIND GETTING IT FOR ME?

RICHARD WAS WAITING FOR ANNIE TO COME BACK WITH HIS PIPE, WHEN A SCREAM OF HORROR SPLIT THE AIR ...

AIEEEEEEEEE!

ANNIE! WHAT IS IT? WHERE ARE YOU?

MR. SINCLAIR... IN THE LIBRARY... IT WAS DARK... TWO BIG GREEN EYES GLOWING...
NOW...NOW... ANNIE! I'M SURE YOU'RE IMAGINING THINGS. THERE ARE NO ANIMALS HERE!
HERE...YOU'LL SEE IT WAS NOTHING!
BARBARA! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I LIKE TO SIT IN THE DARK!
ANNIE? I THOUGHT YOU WERE STAYING OVERNIGHT!
NOT IN THIS HOUSE, I WON'T! THERE'S SOMETHING EVIL AROUND HERE, AND I DON'T WANT ANY PART OF IT!
BUT, ANNIE... YOU PROMISED...
LET HER GO... SHE WON'T GET VERY FAR!
ANNIE RUSHED AWAY FROM THE HOUSE WITH THE TERROR OF THE UNKNOWN GNAWING AT HER NERVES. EVERY SHADOW BROUGHT HINTS OF HORROR, AND EVERY SOUND SEEMED TO BE A FOLLOWING FOOTSTEP...
I'M BEING FOLLOWED! I KNOW IT!
AND...ALMOST AS THOUGH SPRINGING FROM THE SILENT AIR...THE HORROR CAME...
THE EYES! AARGH!'HHH!

HER NECK'S BROKEN...
WHOEVER DID THIS WAS STRONGER THAN ANYONE I'VE EVER SEEN!
A SHORT WHILE LATER...
I'M LIEUTENANT WILSON...HOMICIDE DIVISION...I'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU AND YOUR WIFE FOR A FEW MOMENTS!
COME IN, LIEUTENANT...
DETECTIVE WILSON TOLD OF ANNIE'S MURDER...
POOR ANNIE! WHO COULD HAVE DONE A TERRIBLE THING LIKE THAT?
IT'S EITHER A MANIAC...OR A DEVIL!
WHAT MADE YOU SAY THAT?
THE DETECTIVE NEVER ANSWERED THAT QUESTION AND...SHORTLY AFTERWARD...LEFT...
WELL, BARBARA, THAT WAS SOMETHING... BARBARA! WHERE ARE YOU?
FOR THE SECOND TIME THAT NIGHT, A SCREAM BROKE THROUGH THE SILENCE.
GOOD LORD! THAT SOUNDED LIKE THE DETECTIVE!
ARGHHHHHH!
LIEUTENANT WILSON! IT'S NOT POSSIBLE!
I'VE GOT TO FIND BARBARA! SHE'S NOT SAFE WITH THAT MANIAC AROUND HERE!

RICHARD MOVED WITH DESPERATE SPEED...
THE LIBRARY! ...SHE MIGHT BE IN THERE!
RICHARD SNAPPED ON THE LIGHT...
OH ...THERE YOU ARE! THERE'S BEEN A TERRIBLE ACCIDENT...
I KNOW ALL ABOUT IT!
RICHARD RUSHED FORWARD TO TAKE BARBARA IN HIS ARMS. AS HE TOUCHED HER, HE RECOILED...
YOU'RE COLD! LIKE A DEAD PERSON!... AND YOU KNEW ABOUT THE DETECTIVE! HOW COULD...
HA-HA-HA! OF COURSE I KNEW ABOUT HIM... I KILLED HIM!
WHAT KIND OF HORROR DID I CALL BACK INTO THE WORLD! ...YOU'RE EVIL... EVIL!!
YOU WANTED ME SO BADLY, YOU ASKED THE POWERS OF EVIL TO HELP YOU! BUT...NOW THAT YOU KNOW...
I'LL SNAP YOUR NECK LIKE I SNAPPED THEIRS!
THE CANDLES! FIRE... MAYBE FIRE WILL STOP HER!
RICHARD PICKED UP THE CANDLES AND WHIRLED. THE EFFECT WAS INSTANTANEOUS...
ARGH! GET IT AWAY!
STAY BACK, OR I'LL TOSS THESE CANDLES AT YOU!
ALL RICHARD COULD THINK OF WAS GETTING HELP. HE RAN TO THE TELEPHONE IN THE LIBRARY AND BARRICADED THE DOOR...
THIS MUST HOLD UNTIL I CAN GET THE POLICE!
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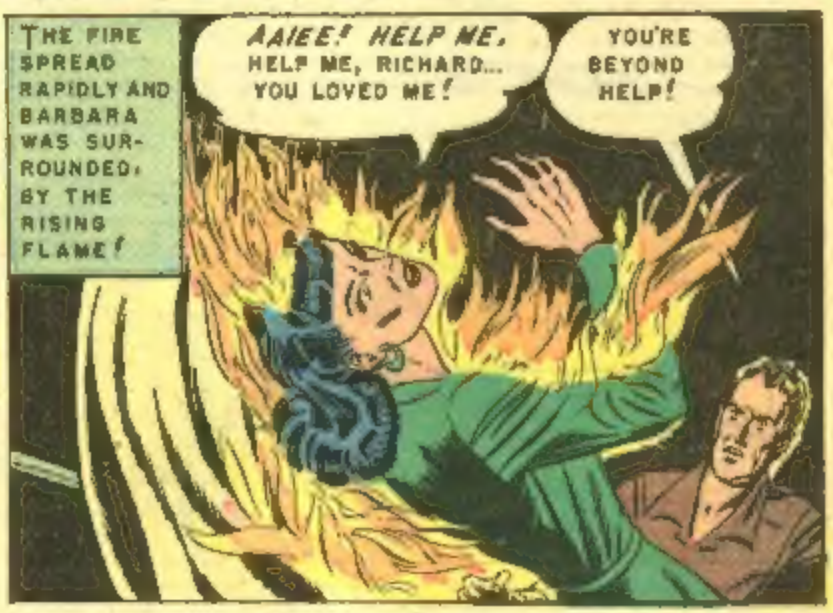
BUT THE STRENGTH OF THE MONSTER THAT WAS BARBARA FOUND THE BARRICADED DOOR TO BE NO PROBLEM...
HURRY... FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE...
DON'T TRY TO ESCAPE!

RICHARD PULLED THE PHONE LOOSE FROM THE WALL AND THREW IT...
HA-HA-HA-HA-HA!
STAY AWAY FROM ME!

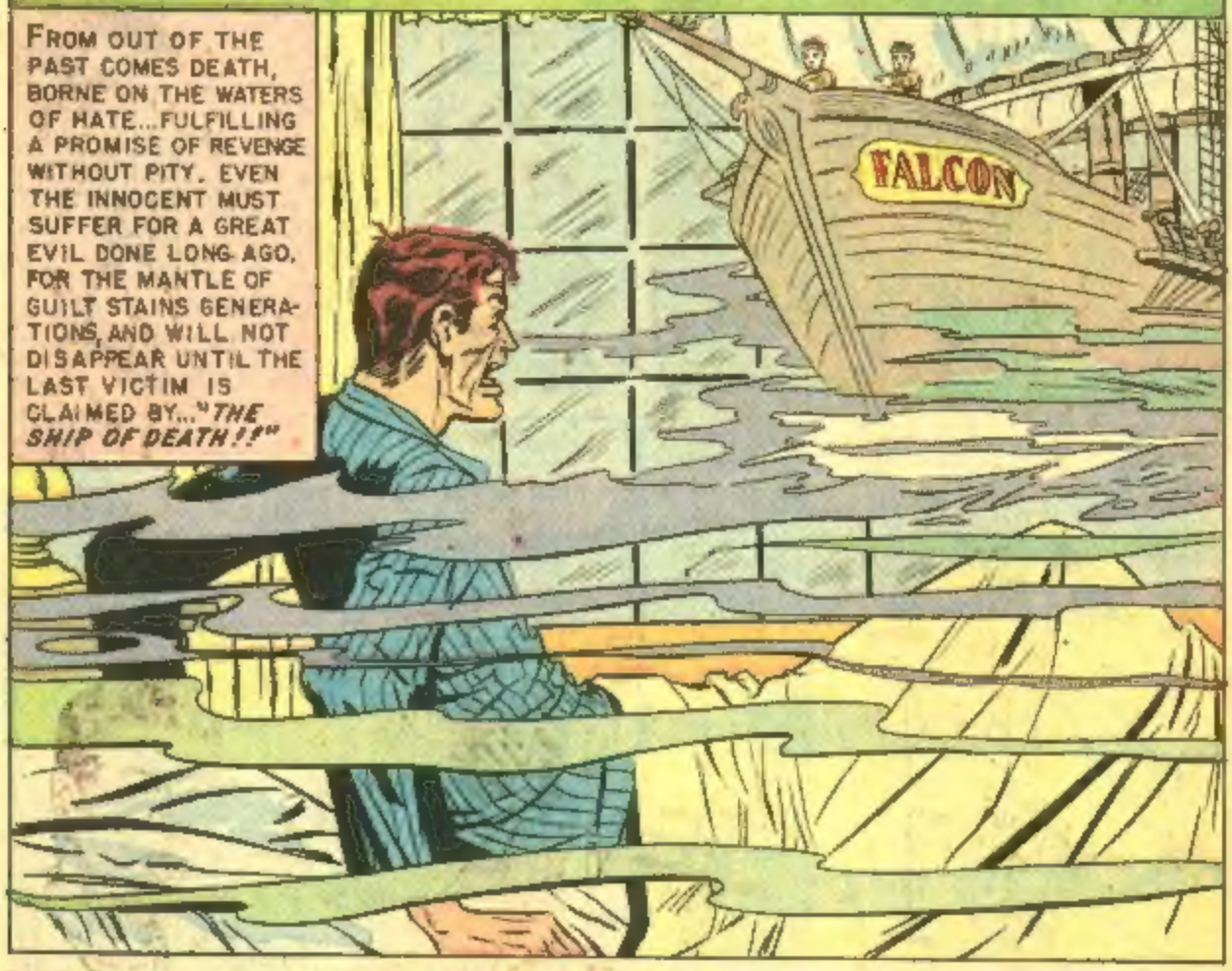

THE FIRE SPREAD RAPIDLY AND BARBARA WAS SURROUNDED BY THE RISING FLAME!
AAIEE! HELP ME, HELP ME, RICHARD... YOU LOVED ME!
YOU'RE BEYOND HELP!

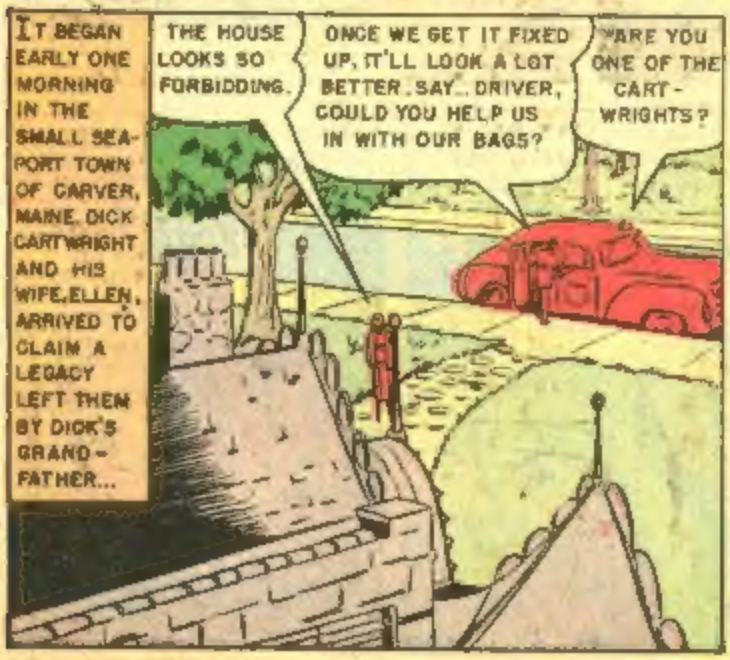
RICHARD RUSHED FROM THE HOUSE...
WE HAD AN URGENT CALL FROM THIS PLACE, MISTER.
IT'S ALL RIGHT NOW!
BETTER SEND IN A FIRE ALARM, JOE.

I WAS PASSING BY! WHAT A TERRIBLE THING!
OH... DOCTOR JONES! IT'S NOT TOO TERRIBLE!

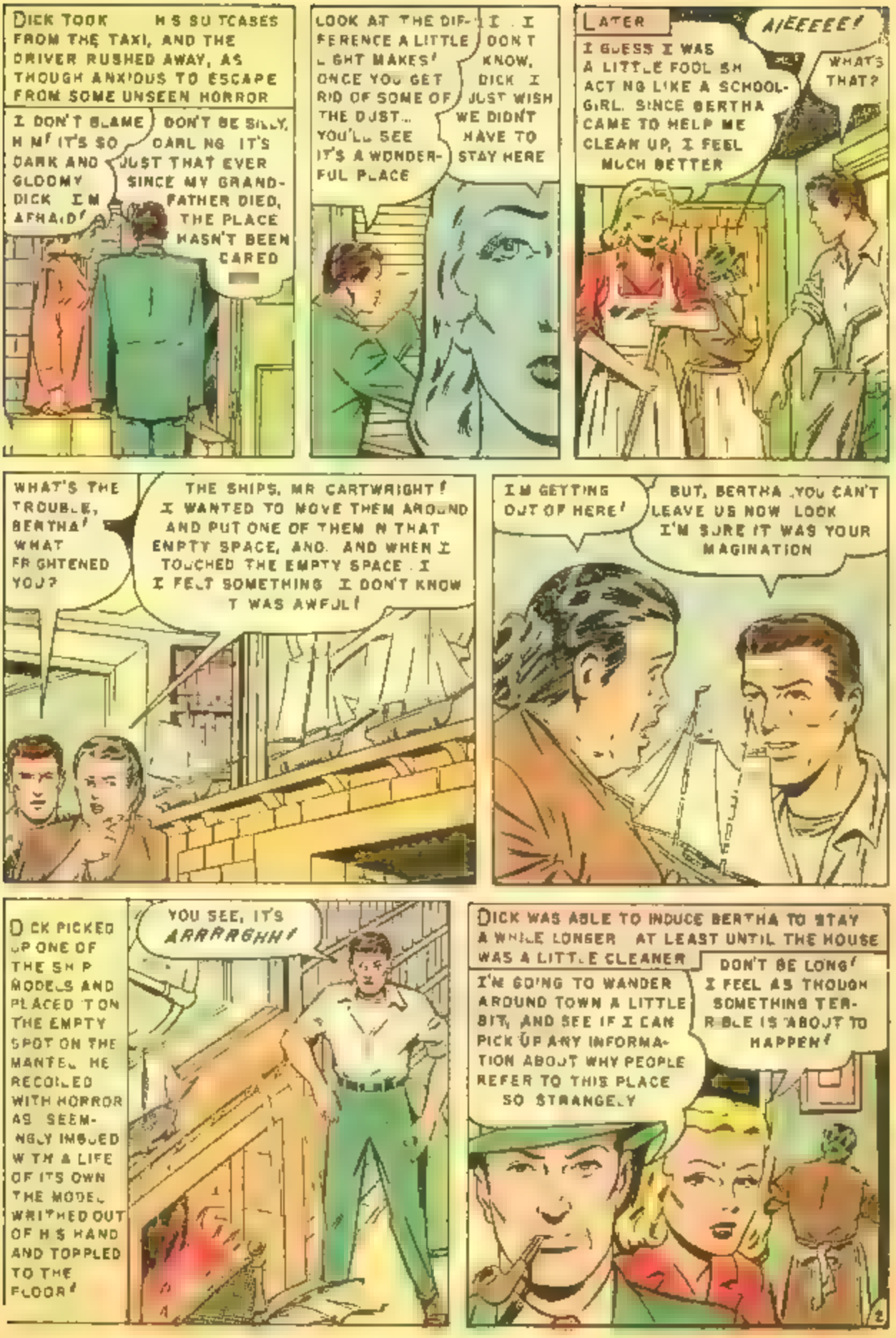
BUT... YOUR WIFE? WHAT HAPPENED TO HER?
SHE DIED SEVERAL DAYS AGO... THE DAY YOU WERE AT THE HOUSE! SHE SAID SHE WANTED TO BE CREMATED.

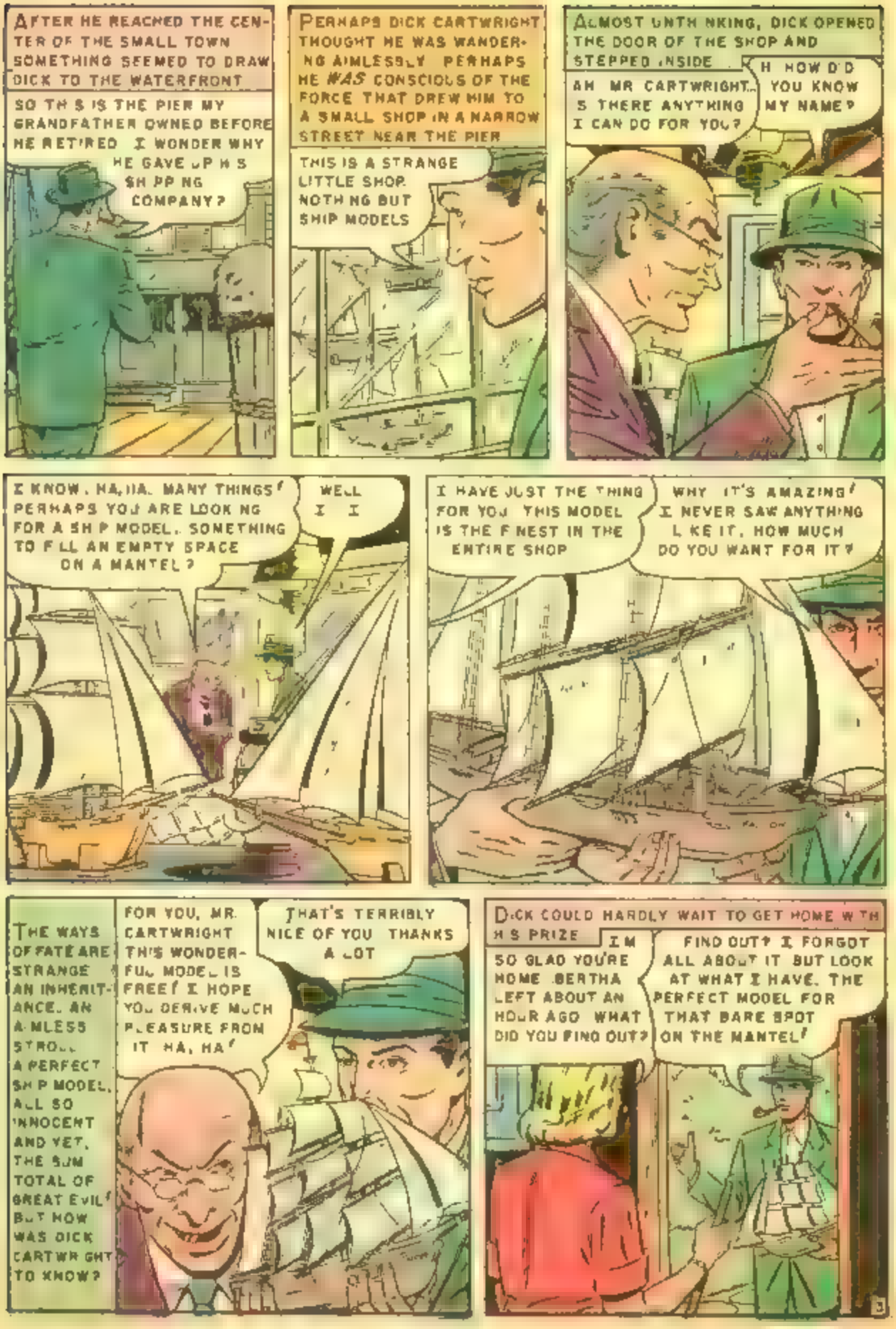
the SHIP of DEATH!

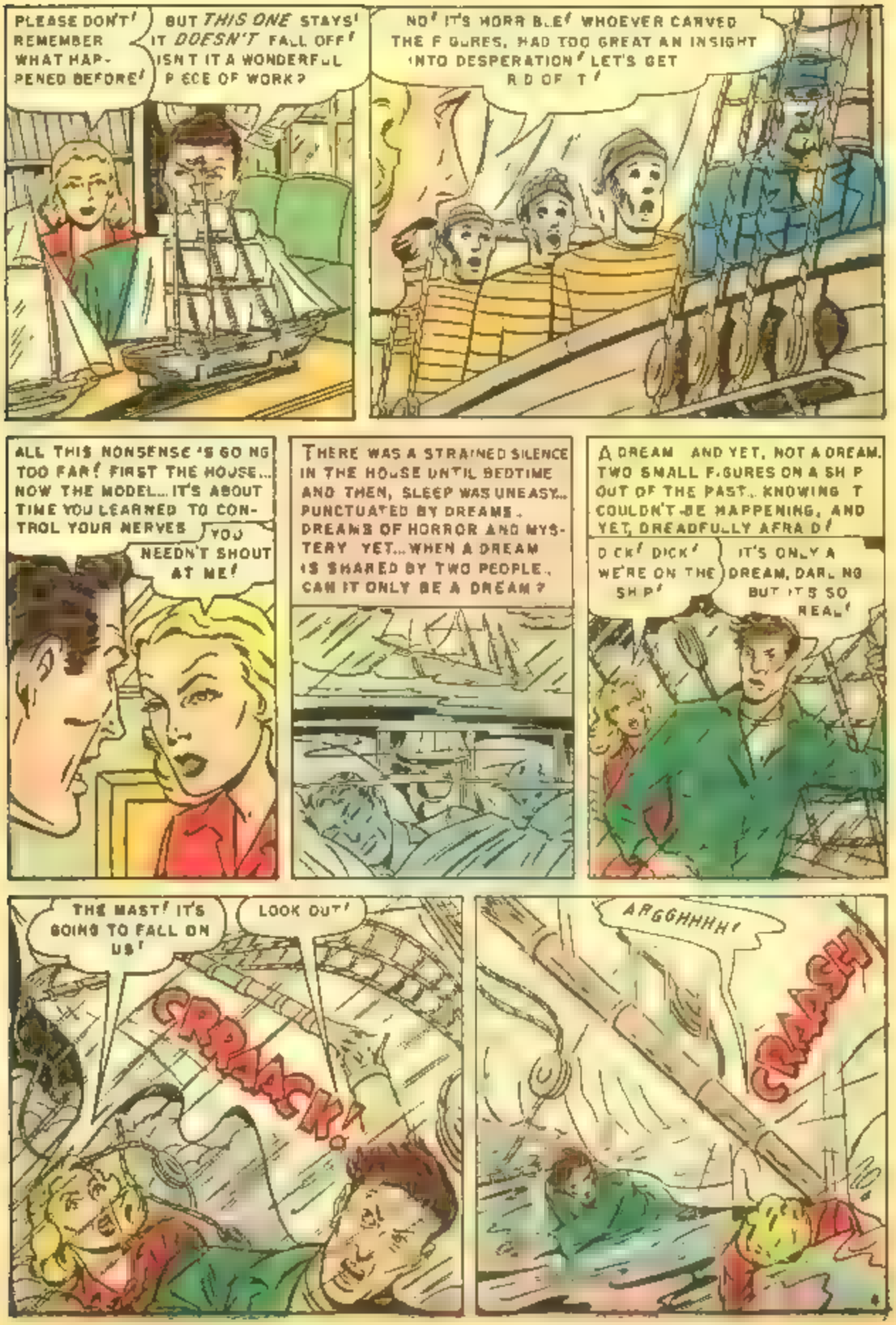

FROM OUT OF THE PAST COMES DEATH, BORNE ON THE WATERS OF HATE...FULFILLING A PROMISE OF REVENGE WITHOUT PITY. EVEN THE INNOCENT MUST SUFFER FOR A GREAT EVIL DONE LONG AGO, FOR THE MANTLE OF GUILT STAINS GENERATIONS, AND WILL NOT DISAPPEAR UNTIL THE LAST VICTIM IS CLAIMED BY..."THE SHIP OF DEATH!!"
FALCON


IT BEGAN EARLY ONE MORNING IN THE SMALL SEA-PORT TOWN OF CARVER, MAINE. DICK CARTWRIGHT AND HIS WIFE, ELLEN, ARRIVED TO CLAIM A LEGACY LEFT THEM BY DICK'S GRAND-FATHER...
THE HOUSE LOOKS SO FORBIDDING.
ONCE WE GET IT FIXED UP, IT'LL LOOK A LOT BETTER. SAY... DRIVER, COULD YOU HELP US IN WITH OUR BAGS?
ARE YOU ONE OF THE CART-WRIGHTS?

WHY, YES I AM. IN FACT I'M ABOUT THE ONLY CARTWRIGHT LEFT IN THE WORLD. BUT I CAN'T SEE WHAT DIFFERENCE THAT MAKES.
LISTEN, MR. "LAST" CARTWRIGHT... I WOULDN'T HELP YOU INTO THAT HOUSE FOR THE BIGGEST TIP IN THE WORLD.

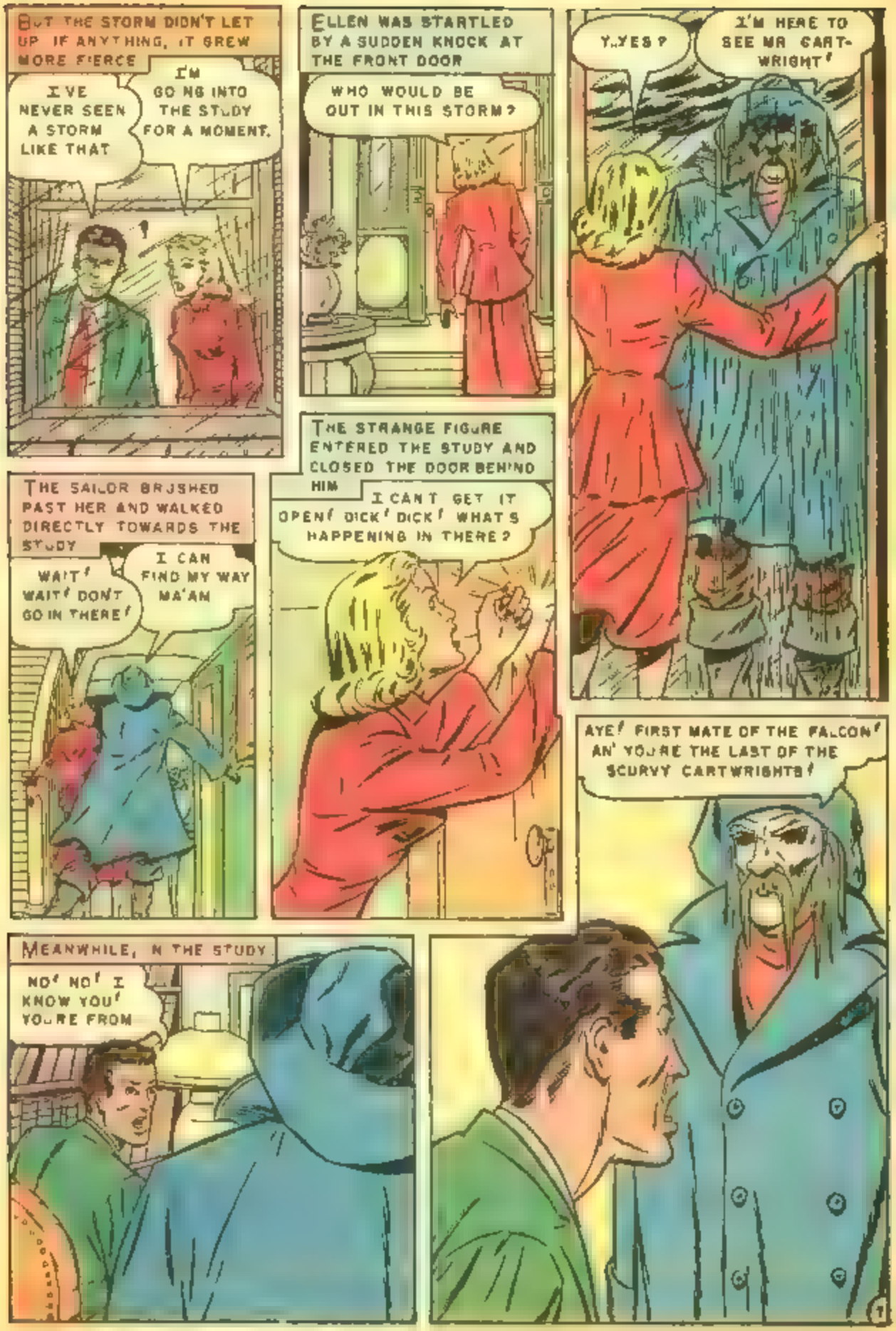

DICK TOOK HIS SUITCASES FROM THE TAXI, AND THE DRIVER RUSHED AWAY, AS THOUGH ANXIOUS TO ESCAPE FROM SOME UNSEEN HORROR
I DON'T BLAME H M' IT'S SO DARK AND GLOOMY DICK I M AFRAID'
DON'T BE SILLY, DARL NG IT'S JUST THAT EVER SINCE MY GRAND-FATHER DIED, THE PLACE HASN'T BEEN CARED
LOOK AT THE DIF-FERENCE A LITTLE L GHT MAKES' ONCE YOU GET RID OF SOME OF THE DUST... YOU'LL SEE IT'S A WONDER-FUL PLACE
I . I DON'T KNOW, DICK I JUST WISH WE DIDN'T HAVE TO STAY HERE
LATER
AIEEEEE!
I GUESS I WAS A LITTLE FOOL SH ACT NG LIKE A SCHOOL-GIRL. SINCE BERTHA CAME TO HELP ME CLEAN UP, I FEEL MUCH BETTER
WHAT'S THAT?
WHAT'S THE TROUBLE, BERTHA' WHAT FR GHTENED YOU?
THE SHIPS, MR CARTWRIGHT! I WANTED TO MOVE THEM AROUND AND PUT ONE OF THEM N THAT EMPTY SPACE, AND. AND WHEN I TOUCHED THE EMPTY SPACE . I I FELT SOMETHING I DON'T KNOW T WAS AWFUL!
I M GETTING OUT OF HERE!
BUT, BERTHA .YOU CAN'T LEAVE US NOW LOOK I'M SURE IT WAS YOUR MAGINATION
D CK PICKED UP ONE OF THE SH P MODELS AND PLACED T ON THE EMPTY SPOT ON THE MANTEL HE RECOILED WITH HORROR AS SEEM-NGLY IMBUED W TH A LIFE OF IT'S OWN THE MODEL WRITHED OUT OF H S HAND AND TOPPLED TO THE FLOOR!
YOU SEE, IT'S ARRRRGHH!
DICK WAS ABLE TO INDUCE BERTHA TO STAY A WHILE LONGER AT LEAST UNTIL THE HOUSE WAS A LITTLE CLEANER
I'M GOING TO WANDER AROUND TOWN A LITTLE BIT, AND SEE IF I CAN PICK UP ANY INFORMA-TION ABOUT WHY PEOPLE REFER TO THIS PLACE SO STRANGELY
DON'T BE LONG' I FEEL AS THOUGH SOMETHING TER-R BLE IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN'
2


AFTER HE REACHED THE CENTER OF THE SMALL TOWN SOMETHING SEEMED TO DRAW DICK TO THE WATERFRONT
SO TH S IS THE PIER MY GRANDFATHER OWNED BEFORE HE RETIRED I WONDER WHY HE GAVE UP H S SH PP NG COMPANY?
PERHAPS DICK CARTWRIGHT THOUGHT HE WAS WANDER- NG AIMLESSLY PERHAPS HE WAS CONSCIOUS OF THE FORCE THAT DREW HIM TO A SMALL SHOP IN A NARROW STREET NEAR THE PIER
THIS IS A STRANGE LITTLE SHOP. NOTH NG BUT SHIP MODELS
ALMOST UNTH NKING, DICK OPENED THE DOOR OF THE SHOP AND STEPPED INSIDE
AH MR CARTWRIGHT... S THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU?
H HOW D D YOU KNOW MY NAME?
I KNOW, HA, HA. MANY THINGS! PERHAPS YOU ARE LOOK NG FOR A SH P MODEL. SOMETHING TO F LL AN EMPTY SPACE ON A MANTEL?
WELL I I
I HAVE JUST THE THING FOR YOU THIS MODEL IS THE F NEST IN THE ENTIRE SHOP
WHY IT'S AMAZING! I NEVER SAW ANYTHING L KE IT. HOW MUCH DO YOU WANT FOR IT?
THE WAYS OF FATE ARE STRANGE AN INHERIT- ANCE. AN A MLESS STROL A PERFECT SH P MODEL. ALL SO INNOCENT AND YET, THE SUM TOTAL OF GREAT EVIL! BUT HOW WAS DICK CARTWR GHT TO KNOW?
FOR YOU, MR. CARTWRIGHT THIS WONDER- FUL MODEL IS FREE! I HOPE YOU DER VE MUCH PLEASURE FROM IT HA, HA!
THAT'S TERRIBLY NICE OF YOU THANKS A LOT
DICK COULD HARDLY WAIT TO GET HOME W TH H S PRIZE
I M SO GLAD YOU'RE HOME BERTHA LEFT ABOUT AN HOUR AGO WHAT DID YOU FIND OUT?
FIND OUT? I FORGOT ALL ABOUT IT BUT LOOK AT WHAT I HAVE. THE PERFECT MODEL FOR THAT BARE SPOT ON THE MANTEL!
3


PLEASE DON'T! REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE!
BUT THIS ONE STAYS! IT DOESN'T FALL OFF! ISN'T IT A WONDERFUL PIECE OF WORK?
NO! IT'S HORRIBLE! WHOEVER CARVED THE FIGURES, HAD TOO GREAT AN INSIGHT INTO DESPERATION! LET'S GET RID OF IT!
ALL THIS NONSENSE IS GOING TOO FAR! FIRST THE HOUSE... NOW THE MODEL... IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU LEARNED TO CONTROL YOUR NERVES
YOU NEEDN'T SHOUT AT ME!
THERE WAS A STRAINED SILENCE IN THE HOUSE UNTIL BEDTIME AND THEN, SLEEP WAS UNEASY... PUNCTUATED BY DREAMS... DREAMS OF HORROR AND MYSTERY YET... WHEN A DREAM IS SHARED BY TWO PEOPLE... CAN IT ONLY BE A DREAM?
A DREAM AND YET, NOT A DREAM. TWO SMALL FIGURES ON A SHIP OUT OF THE PAST... KNOWING IT COULDN'T BE HAPPENING, AND YET, DREADFULLY AFRAID!
DICK! DICK! WE'RE ON THE SHIP!
IT'S ONLY A DREAM, DARLING BUT IT'S SO REAL!
THE MAST! IT'S GOING TO FALL ON US!
LOOK OUT!
CRRAACK!
ARGGHHHH!
CRAASH!

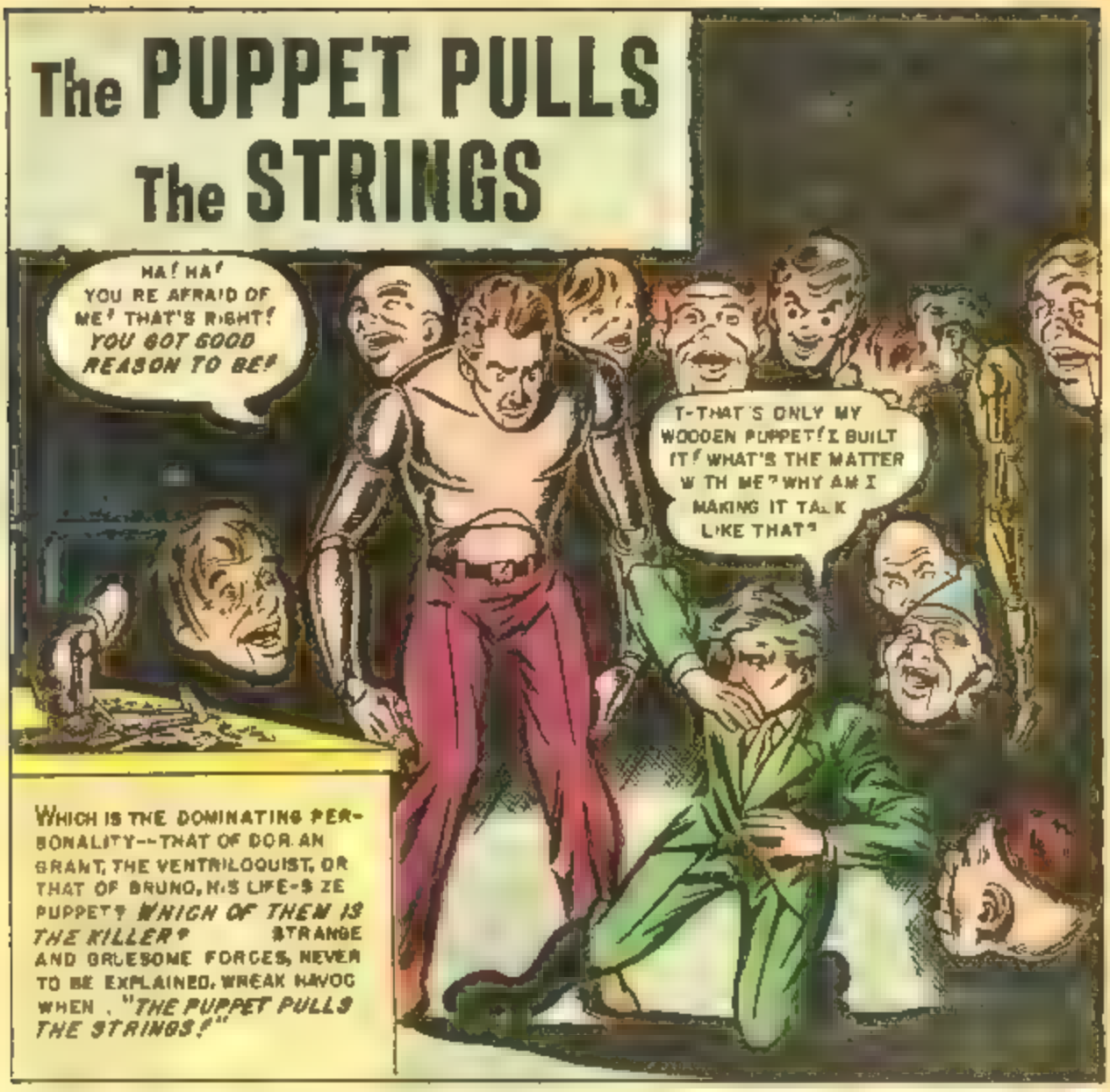
AND SUDDENLY
DICK! I HAD THE MOST FRIGHTENING DREAM! THE SHIP
YOU DREAMED ABOUT THE SHIP, TOO! WE BOTH HAD THE SAME DREAM! I WANT TO GET DOWNSTAIRS AND SEE THAT SHIP!
I GUESS IT WAS KIND OF FOOLISH TO RUN DOWN HERE TO THE STUDY I CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT I EXPECTED TO FIND
AIEEE! LOOK!
IT'S THE MAST! THE SAME ONE THAT FELL IN THE DREAM!
HOW COULD IT... OH, IT MUST ONLY BE A COINCIDENCE THERE COULDN'T POSSIBLY BE ANY CONNEC
WHAT IS IT DICK?
N NOTHING NOTHING AT ALL
I'D SWEAR ONE OF THOSE FIGURES WAS IN A DIFFERENT POSITION THIS AFTERNOON!
I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU SAY, DICK I DON'T WANT THAT THING IN THE HOUSE
MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT I'LL GET RID OF IT!
I...CAN'T BUDGE IT THE BLASTED THING WON'T MOVE!
WHAT CAN WE DO?
WITH THE LIGHT OF DAY, SOME OF DICK'S COURAGE RETURNED, AND HE WAS DETERMINED TO F ND THE SHOP OF THE OLD MAN WHO HAD SOLD H M THE MODEL
THE SHOP WAS HERE BUT NOW THERE'S NO SHOP. I MUST BE LOSING MY MIND

CAN YOU HELP ME? I'M LOOKING FOR A SHOP THAT SPECIALIZES IN MODEL SHIPS
THERE AIN'T NO SUCH PLACE IN ALL OF CARVER!
BUT YESTERDAY I WAS IN A SHOP AND BOUGHT A MODEL OF THE FALCON. YOU MUST KNOW ABOUT IT!
THE FALCON YOU SAY. AYE THAT SHIP I KNOW. BUT NOTHING ABOUT ANY SHOP
WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE FALCON?
SHE WAS THE PRIDE OF CARVER SHE SAILED OUT OF PORT ONE DAY AND NEVER CAME BACK
THERE WAS SOME AS SAID SHE WAS SENT OUT WITHOUT ENOUGH WATER AND RATIONS FOR HER JOURNEY, SO THE OWNER COULD COLLECT INSURANCE ON HER SOME SAY THE SOULS OF THEM SUFFERIN SAILORS ARE WANDERIN' THE SEAS UNTIL THE LAST OF THE OWNER'S KIN IS WIPED OUT!
WHO. WHO WERE THE OWNERS OF THE SHIP?
NAME OF CARTWRIGHT! AND I UNDERSTAND THERE'S ONE LEFT!
FEAR GRIPPED DICK CARTWRIGHT LIKE A LIVING THING
GOT TO PACK AND GET AWAY FROM HERE!
ELLEN! WE'RE LEAVING THIS PLACE TODAY!
THANK HEAVENS! BUT THAT TERRIBLE STORM! WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL IT LETS UP

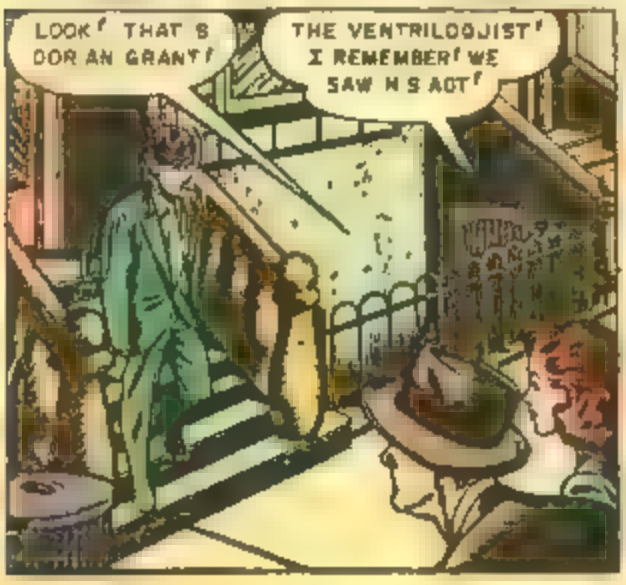

BUT THE STORM DIDN'T LET UP IF ANYTHING, IT GREW MORE FIERCE
I'VE NEVER SEEN A STORM LIKE THAT
I'M GO NG INTO THE STUDY FOR A MOMENT.
ELLEN WAS STARTLED BY A SUDDEN KNOCK AT THE FRONT DOOR
WHO WOULD BE OUT IN THIS STORM?
Y..YES?
I'M HERE TO SEE MR CART-WRIGHT!
THE SAILOR BRUSHED PAST HER AND WALKED DIRECTLY TOWARDS THE STUDY
WAIT! WAIT! DON'T GO IN THERE!
I CAN FIND MY WAY MA'AM
THE STRANGE FIGURE ENTERED THE STUDY AND CLOSED THE DOOR BEHIND HIM
I CAN'T GET IT OPEN! DICK! DICK! WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THERE?
AYE! FIRST MATE OF THE FALCON! AN' YOU'RE THE LAST OF THE SCURVY CARTWRIGHTS!
MEANWHILE, IN THE STUDY
NO! NO! I KNOW YOU! YOU'RE FROM

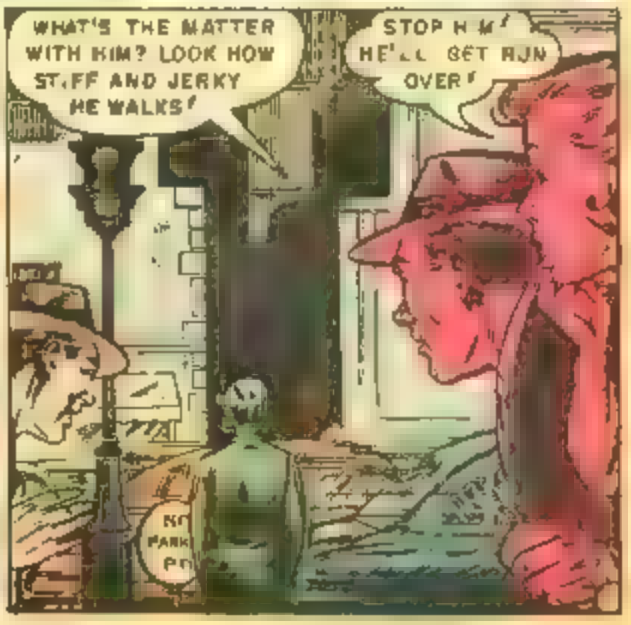
NO! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE YOU'RE JUST A CARVED FIGURE ON A SHIP MODEL! YOU CAN'T HURT ME!
NO CARVED FIGURE, MASTER CARTWRIGHT BUT A SOUL DOOMED TO ETERNAL TORMENT TILL YOU JOIN US THEN OUR WANDER N' WILL STOP!
AIIEEEEEEEEEE!
FINALLY, THE DOOR GAVE WAY TO ELLEN'S FRANTIC TUGGING!
WHERE'S THE SAILOR? OH, DICK!
AS SUDDENLY AS IT HAD APPEARED, THE STORM SUBSIDED, AND ABOUT AN HOUR LATER WHEN THE DOCTOR ARRIVED
IT WAS A HEART ATTACK, MRS CARTWRIGHT.
I I CAN'T BELIEVE IT
THIS MODEL MUST HAVE FALLEN FROM THE MANTEL ODD, NONE OF THE FIGURES BROKE IN THE FALL.
FIVE FIGURES? THERE WERE ONLY FOUR! GIVE IT TO ME, QUICKLY!
A CRY SHATTERED THE SILENCE OF THE ROOM AS ELLEN CARTWRIGHT LOOKED AT THE STRANGE SHIP MODEL
AIEEE! DICK! DICK!
MRS CARTWRIGHT! WHAT IS IT!

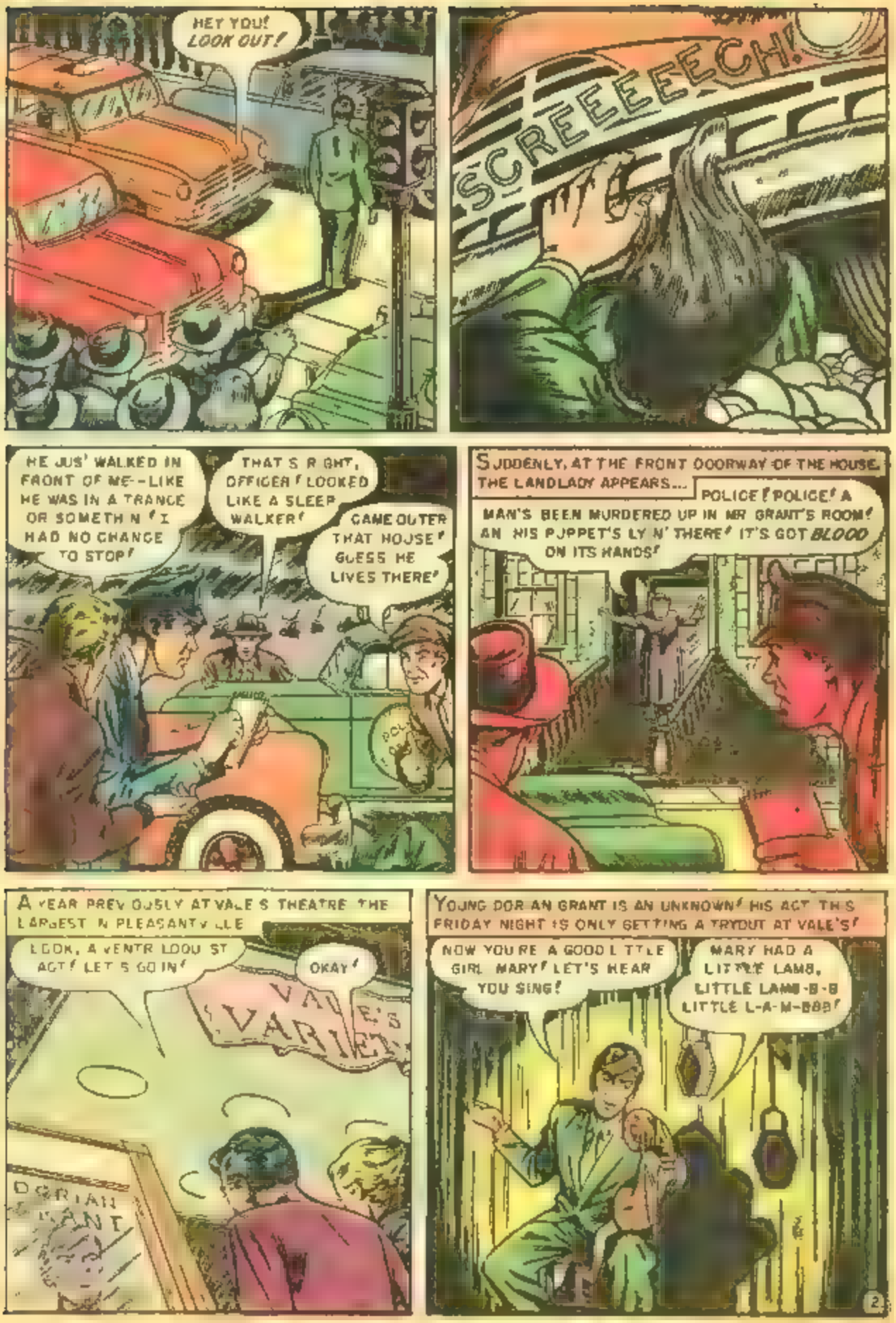
The PUPPET PULLS The STRINGS

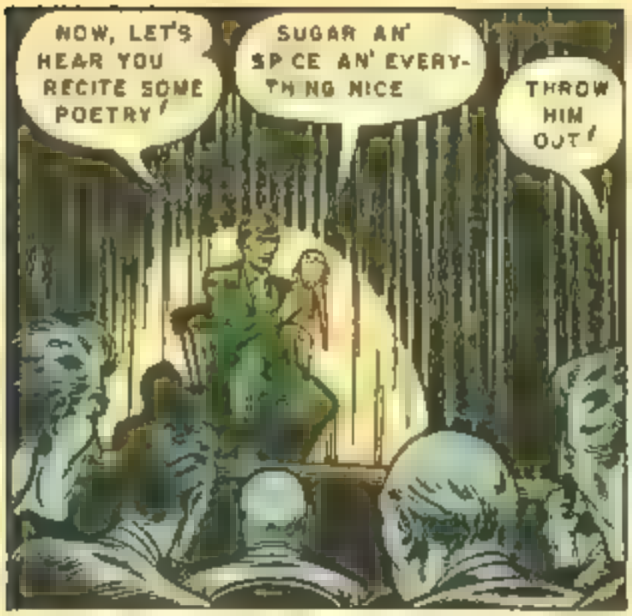

HA! HA! YOU RE AFRAID OF ME! THAT'S RIGHT! YOU GOT GOOD REASON TO BE!
T-THAT'S ONLY MY WOODEN PUPPET! I BUILT IT! WHAT'S THE MATTER W TH ME? WHY AM I MAKING IT TALK LIKE THAT?
WHICH IS THE DOMINATING PERSONALITY--THAT OF DOR AN GRANT, THE VENTRILOQUIST, OR THAT OF BRUNO, HIS LIFE-S ZE PUPPET? WHICH OF THEM IS THE KILLER? STRANGE AND GRUESOME FORCES, NEVER TO BE EXPLAINED, WREAK HAVOC WHEN . "THE PUPPET PULLS THE STRINGS!"

A SUMMER EVENING IN THE CITY OF PLEASANTVILLE.






HEY YOU! LOOK OUT!
SCREEEECH!
HE JUS' WALKED IN FRONT OF ME--LIKE HE WAS IN A TRANCE OR SOMETH'N'! I HAD NO CHANCE TO STOP!
THAT'S RIGHT, OFFICER! LOOKED LIKE A SLEEP WALKER!
CAME OUTER THAT HOUSE! GUESS HE LIVES THERE!
SUDDENLY, AT THE FRONT DOORWAY OF THE HOUSE, THE LANDLADY APPEARS...
POLICE! POLICE! A MAN'S BEEN MURDERED UP IN MR GRANT'S ROOM! AN HIS PUPPET'S LY'N' THERE! IT'S GOT BLOOD ON ITS HANDS!
A YEAR PREVIOUSLY AT VALE'S THEATRE THE LARGEST N PLEASANTVILLE
LOOK, A VENTR LOQU ST ACT! LET'S GO IN!
OKAY!
VALE'S VARIETY
DORIAN GRANT
YOUNG DOR AN GRANT IS AN UNKNOWN! HIS ACT THIS FRIDAY NIGHT IS ONLY GETTING A TRYOUT AT VALE'S!
NOW YOU'RE A GOOD LITTLE GIRL MARY! LET'S HEAR YOU SING!
MARY HAD A LITTLE LAMB, LITTLE LAMB-B-B LITTLE L-A-M-BBB!
2

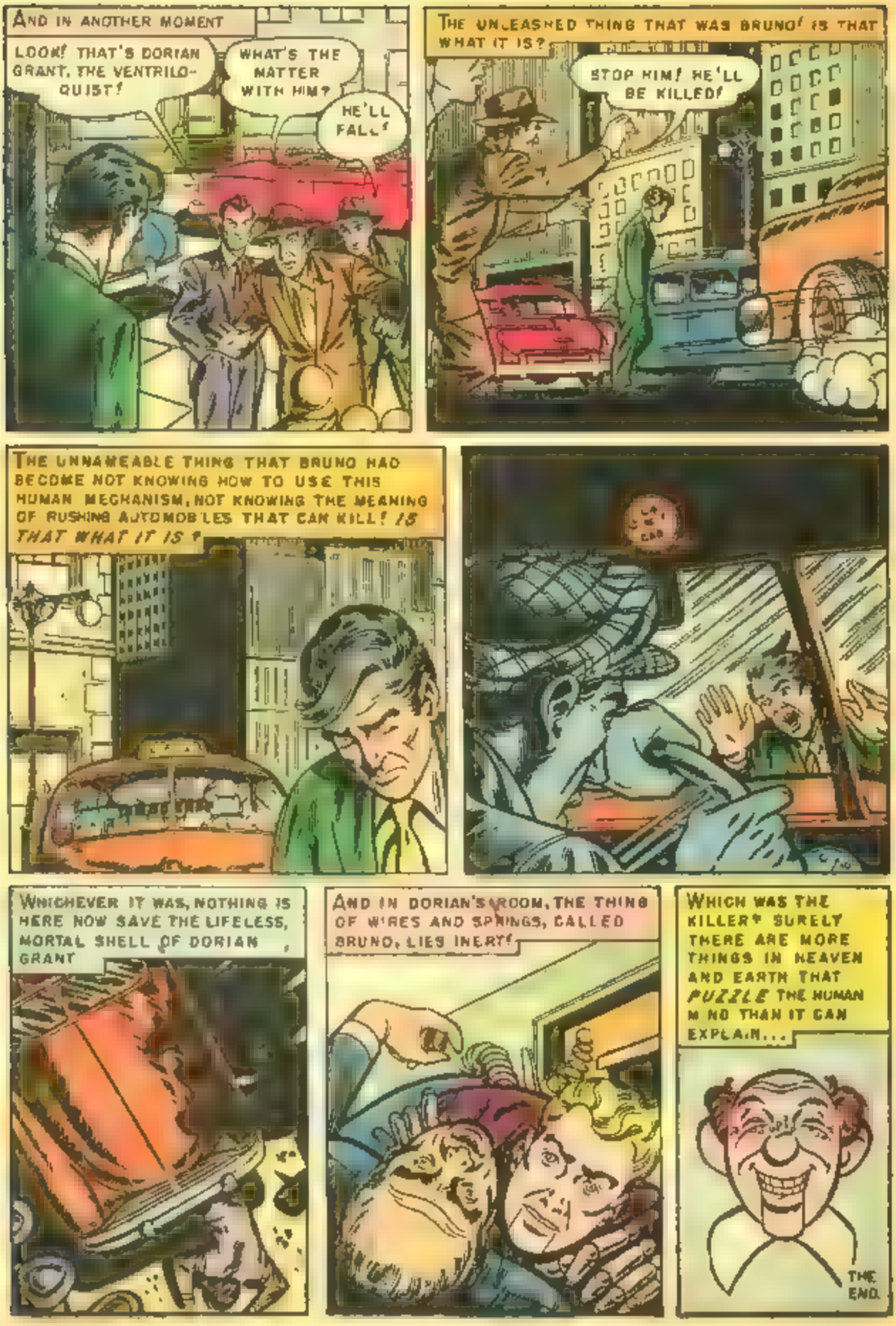


A LIFE-SIZED MAN PUPPET! FOR WEEKS DORIAN WORKS DAY AND NIGHT ON IT A FIGURE OF WOOD AND METAL AND STEEL SPRINGS! WITH MECHANICAL CONTROL-LEVERS. SO INGENIOUS THAT HE CAN MAKE THE PUPPET WALK EVEN GRIP HEAVY OBJECTS AND CARRY THEM!

NOW AT LAST BRUNO IS FINISHED AND DORIAN BEGINS REHEARSING HIS NEW ACT!
YAH! THIS AUDIENCE IS JUST A BUNCH OF CROOKS!
NOW, BRUNO, TAKE IT EASY!
THIS IS SURE GOOD STUFF!
THEN ONE DAY, AS DORIAN REHEARSES
YOU'RE GETTING AFRAID OF ME YOURSELF, EH, BOSS? WELL, YOU GOT REASONS TO BE!
WHA ?
SUDDENLY, DORIAN REALIZES THE PUPPET SAYS THINGS HE HADN'T PLANNED TO SAY!
I MUST BE CRAZY! IT'S BECAUSE I'VE MADE BRUNO SO LIFE-LIKE!
AGAIN IN VALE'S OFFICE, DORIAN DEMONSTRATES HIS NEW ACT!
SEE THAT LITTLE FELLA. FER TWO CENTS I'D KICK HIS TEETH IN! YAH!
NOW NOW, BRUNO!
UGH!
HOW DO YOU LIKE IT, MR. VALE? DO I GET THE JOB?
NO, YOU DON'T! IT'S REVOLTING! YOU GET OUT OF HERE!
THE DISAPPOINTED, MEEK DORIAN HARDLY REALIZES WHAT HE IS SUDDENLY MAKING HIS PUPPET SAY!
WHY YOU ROTTEN LITTLE SHRIMP, FER TWO CENTS I'D...
WHA ?
YOU GET OUT OF HERE GRANT!
OKAY, MR VALE, I'M GOING!
WHATEVER MADE ME SAY THAT? I DON'T WANT TO PICK A FIGHT WITH ANYBODY!

DORIAN APPLIES AT ONE OF THE SMALLER THEATERS...
YA NEVER CAN TELL ABOUT AUDIENCES! I'LL GIVE YOU A TRY!
THANKS A LOT, MR JENKS!
THE AUDIENCE LIKES IT! DORIAN'S ACT IS A HIT
WANTA MAKE SOMETHIN' OF IT, YOU GUYS?
NOW, BRUNO! TAKE IT EASY.
UGH, THAT PUPPET'S WEIRD!
HA! HA! HE'S GOOD!
DORIAN'S FAME SPREADS! AND SOON VALE REALIZES HE MADE A MISTAKE
YOU SHOULD HAVE HIRED DORIAN GRANT! HIS ACT'S MAKIN' A BIG HIT AT JENKS'
I KNOW IT! DON'T WORRY! I'LL GET HIM!
THAT EVENING AS DORIAN IS WORKING OUT SOME NEW DIALOGUE
NOW LOOK HERE, BRUNO, YOU LISTEN TO ME--- WHA--?
WHY, COME IN, MR. VALE! BRUNO AND I WERE JUST DOING SOME REHEARSING!
I'VE COME TO MAKE YOU AN OFFER---BIG MONEY! I KNOW MERIT WHEN I SEE IT!
$
SUDDENLY DORIAN HEARS HIMSELF MAKING BRUNO ANSWER FOR HIM...
SO YOU NEED MY ACT NOW, EH? YOU ROTTEN LITTLE SHRIMP!
WHY YOU--- YOU---?!

IS IT DORIAN GRANT MAKING THE PUPPET TALK AND ACT NOW? OR... WHAT?
I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT I THINK OF YO'!
K. KEEP AWAY FROM ME!
WH WHAT'S THE MATTER W TH ME? I CAN'T STOP IT!
THE END OF YOU!
NO! NO!
HELP! EEEEEEAHH!
THEN AT LAST, THE TERRIBLE SCENE IS OVER
IS THIS DORIAN GRANT STAGGER NG IN A DAZE FROM THE SCENE OF MURDER? OR IS THIS JUST DORIAN GRANT'S BODY WITH SOMETHING ELSE POSSESS NG IT?
DORIAN GRANT'S BODY YES! BUT WHY DOES IT WALK WITH SUCH JERKY STEPS SO MECHANICAL?
MR GRANT?
AND IT DOESN'T ANSWER THE LANDLADY'S FR GHTENED QUEST ONS!
MR GRANT, WHAT'S THE MATTER? WHAT HAPPENED?


AND IN ANOTHER MOMENT
LOOK! THAT'S DORIAN GRANT, THE VENTRILOQUIST!
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HIM?
HE'LL FALL!
THE UNLEASHED THING THAT WAS BRUNO! IS THAT WHAT IT IS?
STOP HIM! HE'LL BE KILLED!
THE UNNAMEABLE THING THAT BRUNO HAD BECOME NOT KNOWING HOW TO USE THIS HUMAN MECHANISM, NOT KNOWING THE MEANING OF RUSHING AUTOMOBILES THAT CAN KILL! IS THAT WHAT IT IS?
WHICHEVER IT WAS, NOTHING IS HERE NOW SAVE THE LIFELESS, MORTAL SHELL OF DORIAN GRANT
AND IN DORIAN'S ROOM, THE THING OF WIRES AND SPRINGS, CALLED BRUNO, LIES INERT!
WHICH WAS THE KILLER? SURELY THERE ARE MORE THINGS IN HEAVEN AND EARTH THAT PUZZLE THE HUMAN MIND THAN IT CAN EXPLAIN...
THE END

THE HOUSE OF SKULLS!

Ellen gazed into the Chinese crystal. Its blue depths reflected the shifting colors of the old witch-woman's hut. The ball was ancient. It had been the property of the Emperors of China, and before that, of the legendary rulers of Sunken Lemuria. Into its depths had gone the sights and sounds of thousands of years of human history and horror. The crone sitting opposite Ellen laughed harshly.

"You want to see your lover again, eh? He whom they shot to death? I can do it . . . for a price!" She chuckled again, and rubbed her dried old hands.

Ellen had to find out the answer from the dead. There was a fortune in loot hidden by the man the cops had cut down.

"Gaze into the crystal, girl." The old witch's yellow eyes glared at the girl. "Gaze deep and watch, watch!"

Ellen stared into the ball's glow until she felt dizzy. The hut was whirling around her, vanishing into fog. The ball grew before her eyes. A greenish light seemed to flow from its depths and surround her, and then . . .

She was no longer sitting in the hut. She was standing on a stony path under the glare of a burning sky. Before her stretched a wall, a wicker-work of bones, yellow-brown and dusty. On top ran a line of skulls, leering at her through empty eye-sockets. There was a gate in that wall, and toward it she walked, reached out a hand as in a dream and opened it. She walked through.

She was in a garden out of a nightmare by Poe. A stony path led up to a small house. The path was bordered by skulls. Plants like snakes writhed and hissed in that garden, and there was the croaking of toads and the scuttling of crablike spiders amidst this living foliage. She walked slowly toward the house. . . It was ghastly, incredible, yet it was vividly real. This was no dream. She knew that she had actually been transported — *somewhere!*

A figure came out of the house, stopped in the doorway, and looked at her. It was tall, thin. At a distance it looked like her Arnie. She called out his name. The figure raised its head, started down the path.

She walked towards it, then hesitated, stopped. It was Arnie, alive, walking, but. . .what a change! He looked as if he had lain in a grave for many months, drying, rotting, crumbling. Shreds of dried flesh clung to bones from which the life had long ago fled. The face was not that of the man she had known. . .only the eyes, the bright eyes rimmed in red, remained wide, glittering. The thing that had been Arnie came toward her. It opened its jaws, called her name in a crackling, grating voice.

She screamed then, wildly, frantically. She turned and fled from the man who had been her lover in life. She had a glimpse of an endless expanse of fire before her, then suddenly. . .

She was lying on the floor of the little hut and the witch was bending over her. Ellen got slowly to her feet, moaning. The crystal was shrouded in black. "Did you ask him what you wanted?" the witch whispered.

Ellen turned a horror-struck face towards the old crone. She shook her head slowly.

She had had the courage to go directly to the land beyond the grave in her search of greed. But she had not realized that there can never be a question of money or earthly loot in the eternal torments of Hell!

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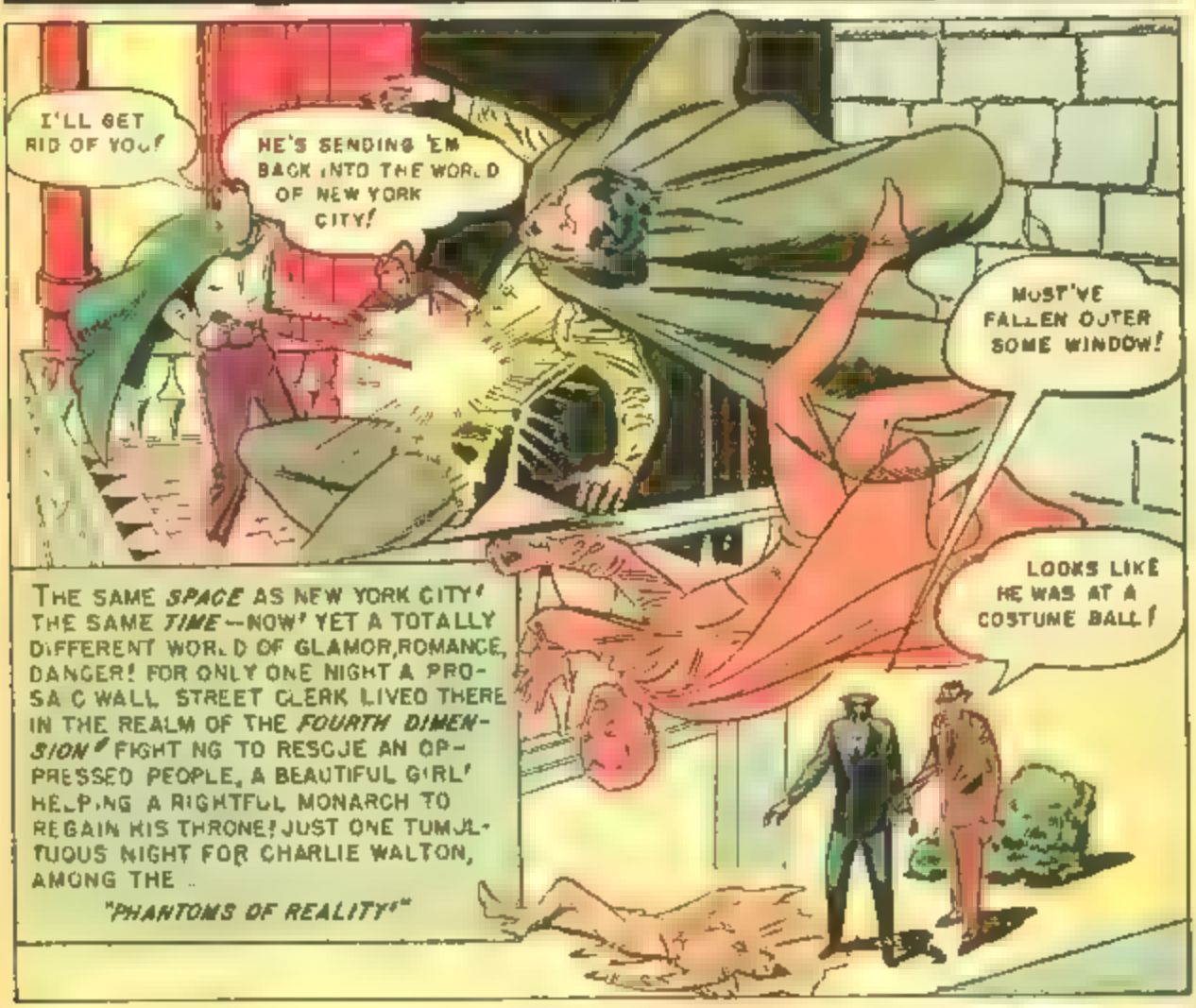
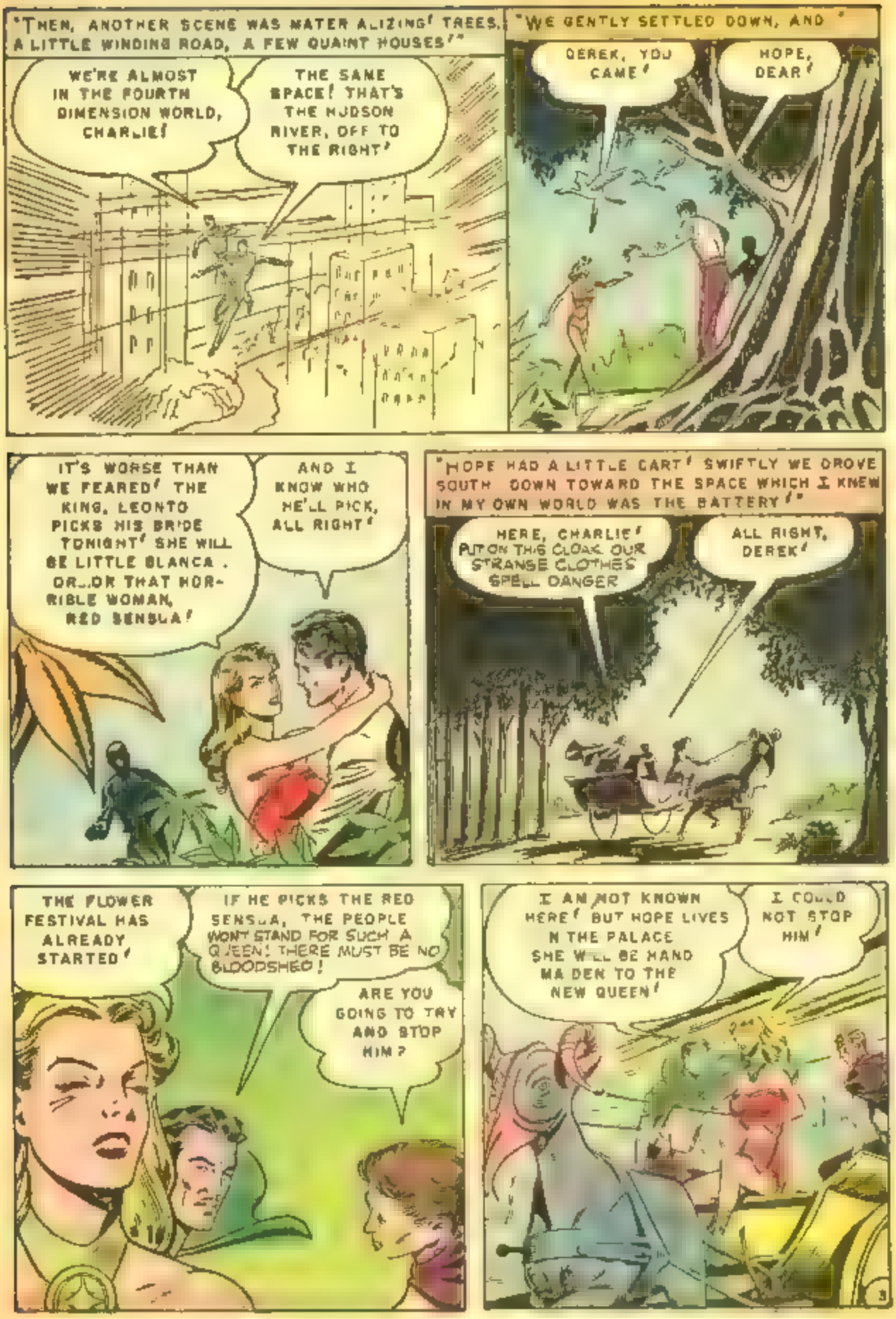
PHANTOMS OF REALITY

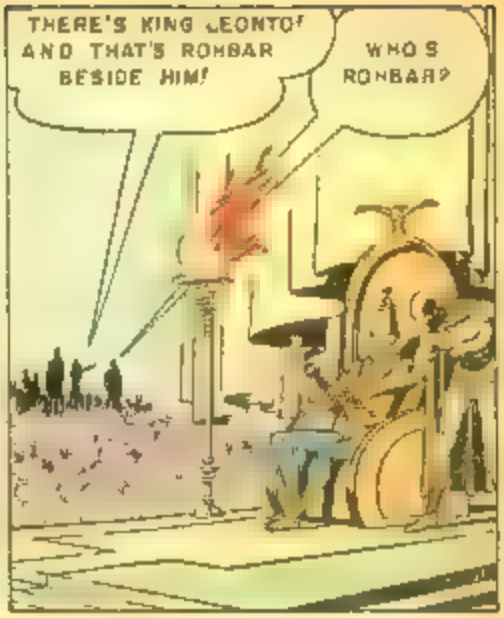

I'LL GET RID OF YOU!
HE'S SENDING 'EM BACK INTO THE WORLD OF NEW YORK CITY!
MUST'VE FALLEN OUTER SOME WINDOW!
LOOKS LIKE HE WAS AT A COSTUME BALL!
THE SAME *SPACE* AS NEW YORK CITY! THE SAME *TIME*—NOW! YET A TOTALLY DIFFERENT WORLD OF GLAMOR, ROMANCE, DANGER! FOR ONLY ONE NIGHT A PROSAIC WALL STREET CLERK LIVED THERE IN THE REALM OF THE *FOURTH DIMENSION*! FIGHTING TO RESCUE AN OPPRESSED PEOPLE, A BEAUTIFUL GIRL! HELPING A RIGHTFUL MONARCH TO REGAIN HIS THRONE! JUST ONE TUMULTUOUS NIGHT FOR CHARLIE WALTON, AMONG THE ..
"*PHANTOMS OF REALITY*"

"I ALWAYS HAD A SECRET YEN FOR ADVENTURE! THAT'S WHY I LIKED DEREK MASON! I'D MET HIM SITTING AROUND THE CLUB ROOMS OF THE N.Y. ATHLETIC CLUB!
HELLO, DEREK!
CHARLIE! HOW'RE THINGS IN WALL STREET?
1

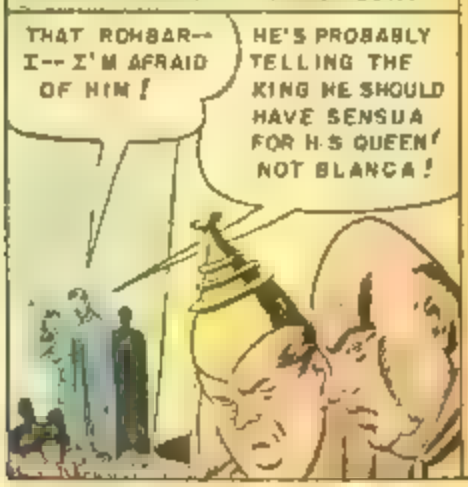
"DEREK NEVER TOLD ME ANYTHING AT ALL ABOUT HIMSELF, AND THEN ONE EVENING
CHARLIE, I'M GOING ON A WELL, A .. TRIP! I WAS THINKING YOU MIGHT WANT TO COME! YOU COULD HELP ME.
A TRIP, DEREK?
"HE TOOK ME TO HIS APARTMENT .. I SAT SPEECHLESS WHILE HE TOLD ME..."
I'VE BEEN INTO A REALM OF THE FOURTH DIMENSION, CHARLIE! A WORLD THAT'S RIGHT HERE, IN THE SAME SPACE AS NEW YORK CITY! I— I'VE GOT TO GO THERE AGAIN! TONIGHT!
-----?
"THIS OTHER WORLD CO-EXISTS WITH US, IN THE SAME TIME!"
THERE WILL BE DANGER, CHARLIE! A WEAKLING MONARCH--HE HAS NO RIGHT TO HIS THRONE! AND THERE IS A GIRL-- A GIRL WHOM I LOVE..
"THE TRANSITION MECHANISMS WERE A NETWORK OF TINY WIRES UNDER OUR CLOTHES."
AT MY SIGNAL, PRESS THE SWITCH--- READY?
I--- I GUESS SO!
IT'S--IT'S WEIRD! THE ROOM--FADING
YOUR HEAD WILL STEADY IN A MINUTE!
W WHERE ARE WE?
THE HALF WORLD BETWEEN THE TWO REALMS! STEADY, CHARLIE!
2


"THEN, ANOTHER SCENE WAS MATERIALIZING! TREES, A LITTLE WINDING ROAD, A FEW QUAINT HOUSES!"
WE'RE ALMOST IN THE FOURTH DIMENSION WORLD, CHARLIE!
THE SAME SPACE! THAT'S THE HUDSON RIVER, OFF TO THE RIGHT!
"WE GENTLY SETTLED DOWN, AND"
DEREK, YOU CAME!
HOPE, DEAR!
IT'S WORSE THAN WE FEARED! THE KING, LEONTO PICKS HIS BRIDE TONIGHT! SHE WILL BE LITTLE BLANCA . OR..OR THAT HORRIBLE WOMAN, RED SENSUA!
AND I KNOW WHO HE'LL PICK, ALL RIGHT!
"HOPE HAD A LITTLE CART! SWIFTLY WE DROVE SOUTH DOWN TOWARD THE SPACE WHICH I KNEW IN MY OWN WORLD WAS THE BATTERY!"
HERE, CHARLIE! PUT ON THIS CLOAK. OUR STRANGE CLOTHES SPELL DANGER
ALL RIGHT, DEREK!
THE FLOWER FESTIVAL HAS ALREADY STARTED!
IF HE PICKS THE RED SENSUA, THE PEOPLE WON'T STAND FOR SUCH A QUEEN! THERE MUST BE NO BLOODSHED!
ARE YOU GOING TO TRY AND STOP HIM?
I AM NOT KNOWN HERE! BUT HOPE LIVES IN THE PALACE SHE WILL BE HAND MAIDEN TO THE NEW QUEEN!
I COULD NOT STOP HIM!
3

"THEN AT LAST WE REACHED THE FESTIVAL GROUNDS! [redacted] WAS DANCING"



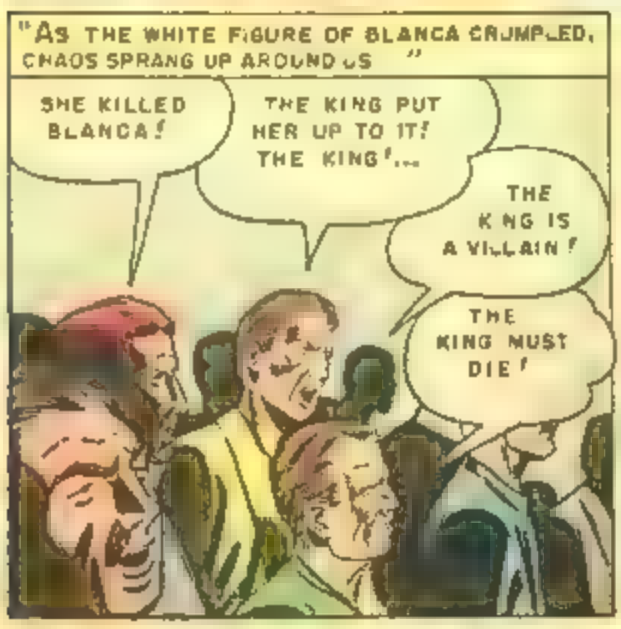
"ROHBAR! A SCOUNDREL ADVENTURER! ADVISER TO THE WEAKLING KING! VILLAINOUS FELLOW, WITH HIS OWN SINISTER SCHEMES..."



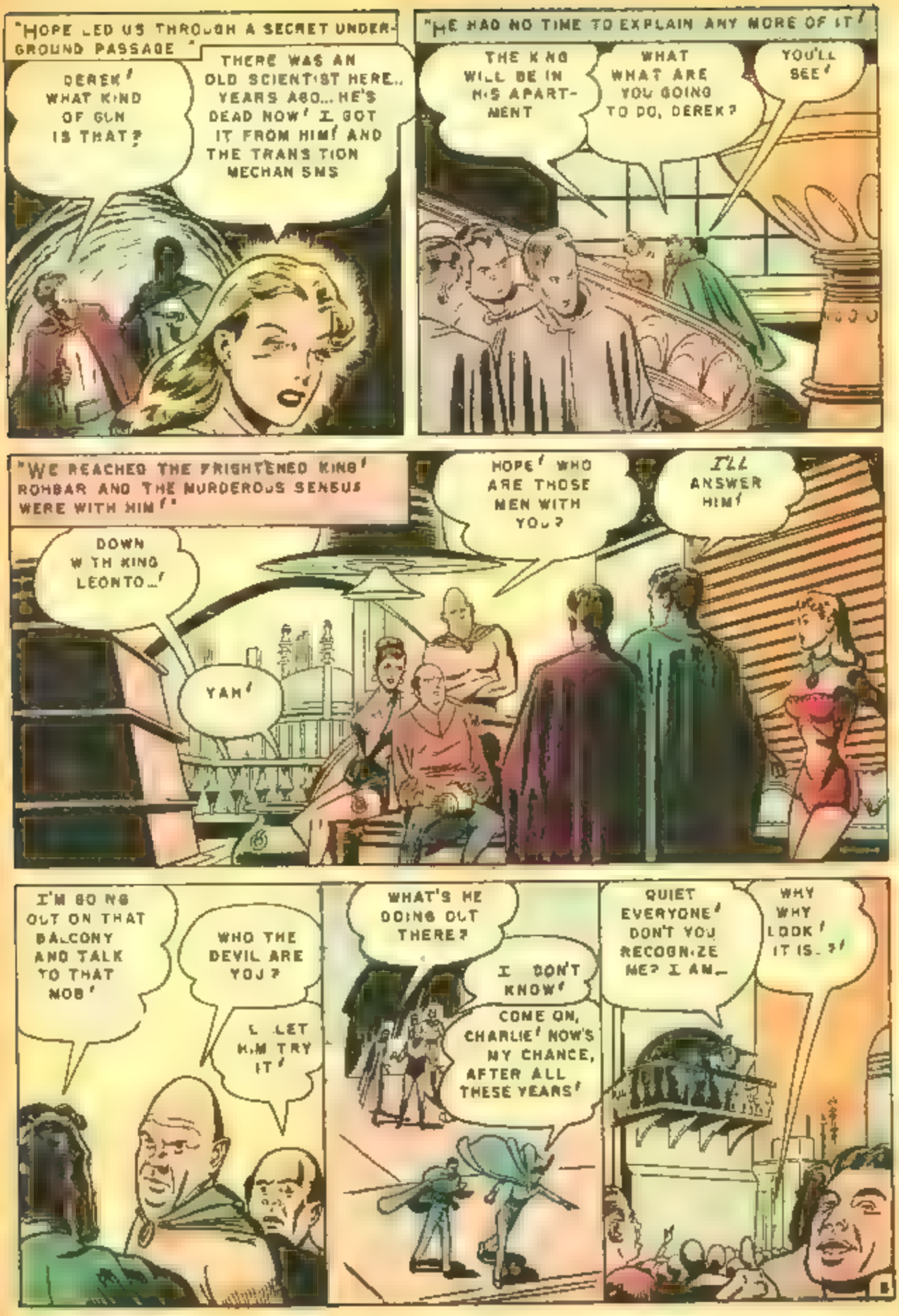
"AND NOW SENSUA WAS DANCING! HER FACE WAS EVIL! ONE MIGHT HAVE ENCOUNTERED SUCH A WOMAN IN SOME ANCIENT CITY, DANCING FOR AN EASTERN PRINCE..."

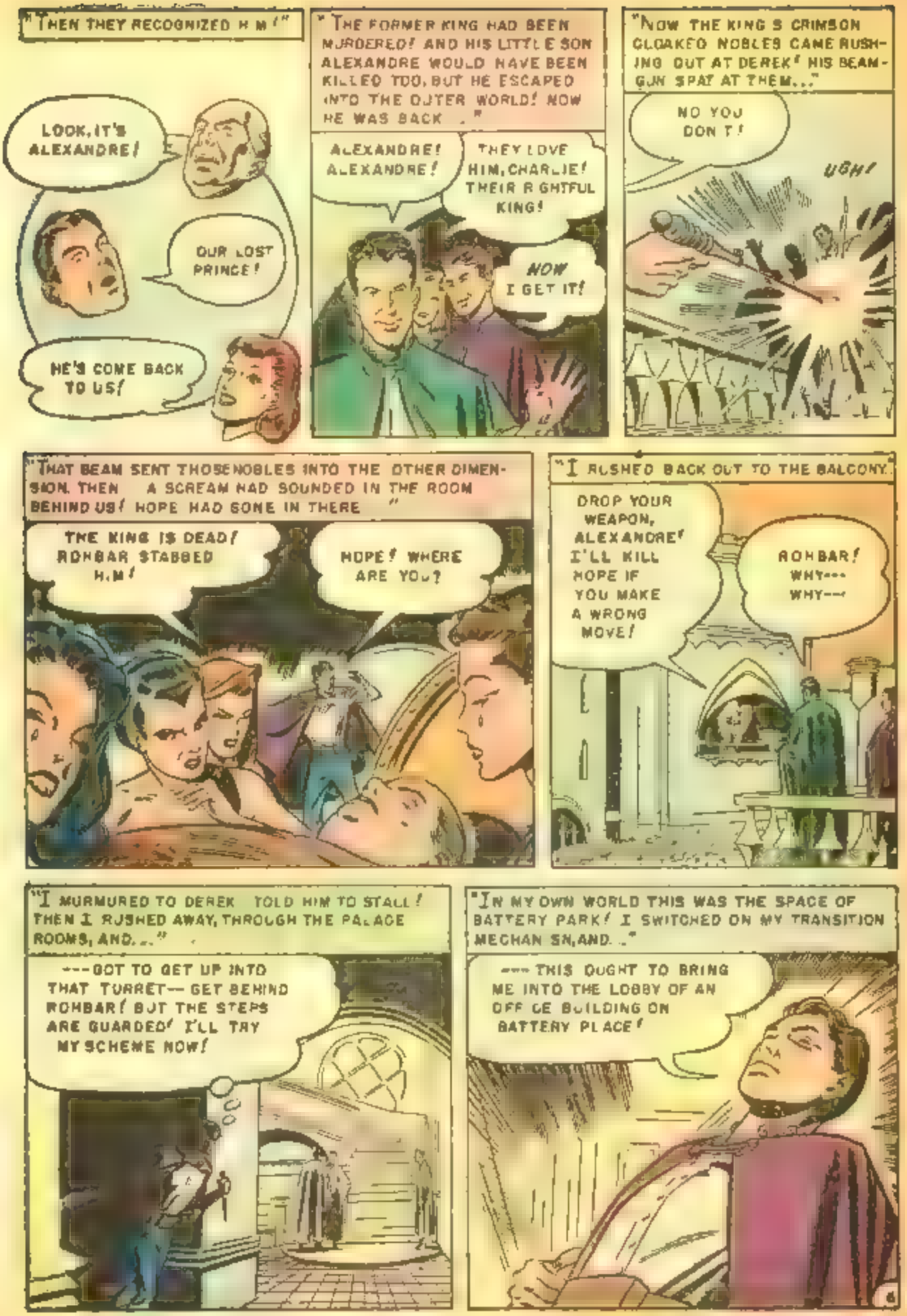
"AS HER DANCE ENDED, SHE TURNED TO WHERE BLANCA WAS STANDING NEARBY ON THE LITTLE DIAS"

"AS THE WHITE FIGURE OF BLANCA CRUMPLED, CHAOS SPRANG UP AROUND US"



THIS WILL MEAN REVOLUTION! COME ON, WE'VE GOT TO GET INTO THE PALACE!
DEREK! HAVEN'T WE GOT ANY WEAPONS?
I HAVE YOUR BEAM-GUN, DEREK! AND-- AND A DIRK!


"HOPE LED US THROUGH A SECRET UNDERGROUND PASSAGE"
DEREK! WHAT KIND OF GUN IS THAT?
THERE WAS AN OLD SCIENTIST HERE... YEARS AGO... HE'S DEAD NOW! I GOT IT FROM HIM! AND THE TRANSMISSION MECHANISMS
"HE HAD NO TIME TO EXPLAIN ANY MORE OF IT!"
THE KING WILL BE IN HIS APARTMENT
WHAT WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, DEREK?
YOU'LL SEE!
"WE REACHED THE FRIGHTENED KING! ROMBAR AND THE MURDEROUS SENSUS WERE WITH HIM!"
DOWN WITH KING LEONTO...!
YAH!
HOPE! WHO ARE THOSE MEN WITH YOU?
I'LL ANSWER HIM!
I'M GOING OUT ON THAT BALCONY AND TALK TO THAT MOB!
WHO THE DEVIL ARE YOU?
LET HIM TRY IT!
WHAT'S HE DOING OUT THERE?
I DON'T KNOW!
COME ON, CHARLIE! NOW'S MY CHANCE, AFTER ALL THESE YEARS!
QUIET EVERYONE! DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE ME? I AM...
WHY WHY LOOK! IT IS...?!


"THEN THEY RECOGNIZED H M!"
LOOK, IT'S ALEXANDRE!
OUR LOST PRINCE!
HE'S COME BACK TO US!
"THE FORMER KING HAD BEEN MURDERED! AND HIS LITTLE SON ALEXANDRE WOULD HAVE BEEN KILLED TOO, BUT HE ESCAPED INTO THE OUTER WORLD! NOW HE WAS BACK . ."
ALEXANDRE! ALEXANDRE!
THEY LOVE HIM, CHARLIE! THEIR RIGHTFUL KING!
NOW I GET IT!
"NOW THE KING'S CRIMSON CLOAKED NOBLES CAME RUSHING OUT AT DEREK! HIS BEAM-GUN SPAT AT THEM..."
NO YOU DON'T!
UGH!
"THAT BEAM SENT THOSE NOBLES INTO THE OTHER DIMENSION. THEN A SCREAM HAD SOUNDED IN THE ROOM BEHIND US! HOPE HAD GONE IN THERE "
THE KING IS DEAD! ROHBAR STABBED H.M!
HOPE! WHERE ARE YOU?
"I RUSHED BACK OUT TO THE BALCONY."
DROP YOUR WEAPON, ALEXANDRE! I'LL KILL HOPE IF YOU MAKE A WRONG MOVE!
ROHBAR! WHY--- WHY---
"I MURMURED TO DEREK TOLD HIM TO STALL! THEN I RUSHED AWAY, THROUGH THE PALACE ROOMS, AND. . ."
---GOT TO GET UP INTO THAT TURRET-- GET BEHIND ROHBAR! BUT THE STEPS ARE GUARDED! I'LL TRY MY SCHEME NOW!
"IN MY OWN WORLD THIS WAS THE SPACE OF BATTERY PARK! I SWITCHED ON MY TRANSITION MECHAN SN, AND. ."
--- THIS OUGHT TO BRING ME INTO THE LOBBY OF AN OFF CE BUILDING ON BATTERY PLACE!
6

"I HAD FORGOTTEN THAT THERE WOULD BE A WATCHMAN HERE!"

HATE TO DO THIS TO YOU, OLD BOY!

A GHOST! EEEEOOOW! UGH!

"I FIGURED THE SPACE WHICH HELD ROHBAR'S LITTLE TURRET WOULD BE ABOUT TWO FLIGHTS UP! I DASHED UP THE STAIRS, SWITCHED ON THE TRANSITION MECHANISM, AND IN ANOTHER MOMENT..."

I HIT IT RIGHT!

ALEXANDRE IS AN IMPOSTER! LEONTO IS DEAD, AND I SHALL BE YOUR KING! AND LITTLE HOPE WHOM YOU LOVE... I WILL TAKE HER FOR MY QUEEN!

HOPE YOUR QUEEN! YOU VILLAIN!

"ROHBAR HAD TURNED, AND HIS KNIFE HAD FLASHED AT SENSUA!"

I'LL SURE MAKE SHORT WORK OF YOU!

WHA...?

"THEN I TOLD THE PEOPLE! THEIR BELOVED ALEXANDRE WAS THEIR KING!"

HERE IS YOUR QUEEN! AND THERE IS YOUR ALEXANDRE!

LONG LIVE KING ALEXANDRE!

SO NOW I'M BACK IN MY OWN WORLD! MY TRANSITION BATTERY GAVE OUT WHEN I LANDED! JUST A WALL ST. CLERK! BUT I HAD ONE NIGHT OF REAL ADVENTURE!

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